



Rome-Cartersville Development Corridor Project Overview

In the mid 1970s, I-75 was completed through Bartow County, replacing US 41 as the major north-south arterial. SR 20 and US 41 became the direct connection between US 411 and I-75. The increase in local commercial development and growth in traffic volumes along US 41 has resulted in steadily rising levels of congestion.

Based on the recommendations from a feasibility study in the mid 1980s, development of a project to construct a US 411 Connector was initiated in 1986. The concept for the US 411 Connector would later be incorporated into a newly proposed recommendation for an outer perimeter highway around Atlanta, which would later become known as the Outer Perimeter.

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for US 411 to I-75 was approved in 1989, but challenged in court and overturned. It was later incorporated into the Draft EIS being prepared for the Northern Arc, a proposed freeway between I-75 in Bartow County and I-85 in Gwinnett County. Since the Northern Arc is no longer under consideration, the US 411 Connector is currently being planned as an independent project requiring a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS), being a supplement to the original EIS of 1989.

The DSEIS was approved by FHWA to go to a Public Hearing Open House (PHOH), which was held on October 24, 2005. GDOT received public and agency comments on the DSEIS and has since completed the Final SEIS, which was made available for public and agency comment at the end of August 2007.

After the FSEIS was signed, the project was reexamined in light of budgetary constraints to develop a less costly alignment that would still effectively accomplish the Need and Purpose of the project. A multidiscipline value engineering team was convened to conduct the required study and concluded that, while the D-Avoidance/Minimization Alternative represents an optimal design, it cannot be completely funded at this time. Therefore, the D-VE Alternative was designed as a scaled down version that would provide comparable benefits with reduced environmental impacts and at a cost that is less than two-thirds of the originally estimated cost of the D-Avoidance/Minimization Alternative.

A Technical Memorandum dated August 2008 was developed to document the changes proposed and the resultant decrease in environmental impacts, and it provided a documented conclusion that the current proposed design would not represent a significant change from the design concept and scope of the D-Avoidance/Minimization Alternative. Additional meetings were held with Federal and State resource agencies, the Citizen's Advisory Committee and the public to present the D-VE Alternative and to gather input. Afterwards, the FHWA determined that no additional information would be gained by requiring a supplemental document to advance the D-VE Alternative as the selected alternative. As a result, FHWA issued a Record of Decision (ROD) on October 29, 2008, which is the final decision of the NEPA process.